(b) to (d) As per the Forest (Conservation) Rules, 2003, a time limit of 60 days has been prescribed for the Central Government to take a decision on the complete proposals received from the State Government for diversion of forest land under forest (Conservation) Act, 1980. The proposals for diversion of forest land are considered on the merit of the case, and in accordance with the provisions of the Forest (Conservation) Act, 1980, and rules and guidelines made thereunder.

Environmental Clearance to Western Free-way Sea Link Project

1655. DR.P.C. ALEXANDER: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have stipulated a condition while granting environmental clearance to the Western Free-way Sea Link Project in Mumbai that there should be a permanent transfer of the Municipal Corporation land extending to 15.90 acres at Worli to the Naval Establishment;

(b) if so, why a condition unrelated to the Project has been included in the clearance; and

(c) whether the project will be given clearance deleting the condition so that this very important project designed for decongesting the existing chocked Western Road network can be carried out expeditiously?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI NAMO NARAIN MEENA): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The said condition was stipulated in the light of the comments received from Ministry of Defence based on the agreement arrived at between Mumbai Municipal Corporation and Headquarters of Western Naval Command, Mumbai.

(c) No, Sir.

Draft Policy on Environment

1656. SHRIMATI HEMA MALINI: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the proposed draft policy on environment has in its purview the problem of pollution specially that of noise, air and water pollution caused by industries located in residential areas in urban habitations;

(b) if so, the details of specific provisions in this regard; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI NAMO NARAIN MEENA): (a) to (c) The draft National Environment Policy (NEP) addresses the issue of Pollution Abatement in its para 5.2.7. Specific provisions relating to the main causes of and proposed action programme for air, water and noise pollution are given in para 5.2.7(i), 5.2.7 (ii) and 5.2.7(iv) respectively.

Air Pollution

1657. SHRI RAJEEV SHUKLA: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that air pollution levels in major cities including metros in India are above levels that are regarded as safe;

(b) whether it is also a fact that pollution levels in many major cities have been increasing over the last five years;

(c) if so, change in pollution level figures for five years for ten most polluted cities in India; and

(d) the steps Government propose to take to bring back the air pollution levels within safe thresholds in the worst-affected cities?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI NAMO NARAIN MEENA): (a) and (b) A decreasing trend has been observed in the Sulphur-dioxide (SO_2) levels in residential areas of many major cities. The trend in annual average concentration of Nitrogen-dioxide (NO_2) is fluctuating in most of the cities and levels of Respirable Suspended Particulate Matter (RSPM) are usually higher than the stipulated standards mainly due to natural dusty conditions;

(c) Based on the ambient air quality monitored under the National Ambient Air Quality Programme (NAAQM), Central Pollution Control Board, in coordination with the State Pollution Control Boards, has identified top ten cities on the basis of RSPM levels observed in the residential areas during 2003 given in the enclosed Statement (*See* below). A similar trend of air pollution is observed in these ten cities as that of major cities stated above.